

RESPITE COMPANION SERVICE PROGRAM

**State of Hawaii
Department of
Human Services**
Respite Companion
Service Program One
Kapiolani Building
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What is the Respite Companion Service Program?

The Respite Companion Service Program (RCSP) is an employment and training program established by the department which provides part-time employment opportunities as respite companions for low-income persons, aged fifty-five and older, who assist families providing 24-hour care for frail elderly family members in the homes.

Since 1980, the RCSP under the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), has received funding annually from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), Workforce Development Division. It is administered by the Department of Human Services.

What are the Respite Companion Service Program's goals?

RCSP has two goals. The first goal is to provide relief to family care-givers to reduce their burnout and to enable their families to continue caring for their loved ones in their homes.

The second goal is to assist companions in locating unsubsidized (private) employment.

Who is eligible to be a Respite Companion?

Senior citizens who are:

- age 55 and over.
- low income.
- in good health.
- able to work 19 hours per week.
- willing to assist the homebound elderly (age 60 and over) with personal care, home management, and socialization activities.

Who is eligible to be a Program Client?

Frail elderly program clients are:

- age 60 and over.
- usually being cared for by family member(s) 24-hours per day.
- with health problems which necessitates the need for oversight supervision and personal care (bathing, dressing, grooming, toileting) assistance.
- in need of other activities which include home management and socialization to assist the family caregiver.
- known to and have been assessed as being in need of assistance by one of the participating work stations.

There are no income eligibility requirements for program clients and they may not be charged for the services of the companions. Annually, 250 clients are provided with 30,000 hours of service which saves the state \$3.5 million in institutional costs.

What services are provided by the Respite Companion/ Respite Companion Service Program?

Respite companions carry out activities and tasks designed to enable family caregivers the opportunity to keep their frail elderly family members at home.

Services include:

- in-home personal care and health-related services which include sitter service; assisting with bathing, grooming, dressing, toileting; monitoring the use of medication and health; assisting with occupational and physical therapy.
- home management services which include assisting with light shopping, light house-keeping, light meal preparation, and personal errands.
- socialization activities which include providing companionship, conversation, informal counseling, reading, writing, reality orientation; assisting with hobbies and other interests.

By providing temporary relief to family caregivers through the use of respite companions, they are able to get away for awhile to go shopping, to pay bills, to have time for themselves, etc.

Targeted families are those providing 24-hour care to a frail elderly family member who resides in the home, assessed as being in a state of stress, and requiring outside assistance in order to maintain the frail elderly family member's residence within the home, whereby delaying or avoiding a placement in a setting outside the family home (i.e., care home, nursing home).

“Growing old and frail in the Golden Years can be pretty bleak at times the companion who is assigned to me has brought so much joy and happiness to my life and much needed relief to my wife I feel truly blessed!”

This statement describes the feelings of a frail elderly husband who is homebound and who is being cared for by his wife which enables him to remain at home rather than to be placed in a care or nursing home.

Participating Work Stations:

CareResource Hawaii	599-4999
Honolulu Gerontology Program	543-8437
Kaiser Community Based Services	597-2888
Kaiser Maile Clinic	696-0452
PACE Hawaii at Maluhia	832-6112
Saint Francis Home Care	547-6511
Saint Francis Medical Social Work Department	547-6392
Central Oahu Public Health Nursing	621-5621
East Honolulu Public Health Nursing	733-9220
Windward Public Health Nursing	233-5450

(In-home respite care is a way to help alleviate care giver burden and to help delay institutionalization by providing temporary relief from elder care responsibilities. The frail elder is able to preserve his or her independence at home.